



# TakeCharge

WELCOA'S ONLINE SELF-CARE BULLETIN



## Energize *Yourself & Your Family*

Eating healthy foods and staying physically active can help you keep up with the demands of your busy life. Moving more and eating better may help you take better care of yourself and be there for the people who depend on you.

If you are overweight and inactive, you may be more likely to develop:

- certain forms of cancer
- heart disease
- high blood pressure
- stroke
- type 2 diabetes (high blood sugar)

### Why move more and eat better?

You may improve your health if you move more and eat better, but that's not the only reason to be active and make healthy food choices. You can also:

- charge up your body for work, play, and family
- feel better about yourself and manage stress better
- look better in your clothes
- set a good example for your children and your friends

*Next Page*  
↓



# TakeCharge

WELCOA'S ONLINE SELF-CARE BULLETIN

Continued from previous page

## Should I talk to my health care provider before starting an exercise program?

Most people do not need to see their health care provider before getting physically active. If you have heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis (weak bones), or obesity, talk to your health care provider before starting a vigorous physical activity program.

You do not need to talk to your provider before you start a less intense activity like walking. If you have been inactive for some time, plan to

walk at least twice a week for a month. Once you meet this goal, add another day or make your walk longer.

## How much physical activity do I need?

Regular physical activity can be fun and help you feel great. To improve your health, aim for at least 150 minutes per week (30 minutes a day on 5 days) of moderately intense aerobic activity. This type of aerobic activity, like brisk walking or dancing, speeds up your heart rate and breathing. To lose weight and keep it off,

you may need more: Aim for 300 minutes per week (an hour a day for 5 days).

On at least 2 days per week, also try activities that strengthen your muscles. Examples include heavy gardening (digging and shoveling) and exercises that use hand weights.

For best results, spread out the physical activity throughout the week. Even 10 minutes at a time counts! 💡

## How can I handle barriers to becoming more physically active?

Adding more physical activity to your life may seem a challenge. Here are some common barriers and solutions.

### "I don't have time for physical activity."

You can "sneak" it into your day a few minutes at a time. Get started by making these small changes in your daily routine:

- Add three 10-minute walks to your day, if you can do so safely near your work or home.
- Take regular breaks from sitting at the computer or watching TV. Get up, move,

and stretch by lifting your hands up over your head. Twist side to side.

- Schedule your workouts as you would a hair or work appointment and stick to your plan.
- Start taking the stairs instead of the elevator whenever you have the option (be sure the stairs are well lit).
- If your job requires a lot of sitting, add a walk around the block to one of your daily breaks.



### "It's too expensive."

There are ways to be active that are free or lower in cost. You can:

- Check out programs that may be offered at your workplace or local place of worship, like dance classes or walking programs.
- Find a local park or school track where you can walk or run.
- Walk in a mall or a free museum.

### "Physical activity is a chore."

It can be fun!

- Do things you enjoy, like biking, gardening, playing sports, or swimming.

- Get a friend to try out a dance class with you. Walk or take an exercise class with a friend or a group. This way, you can cheer each other on, have company, and feel safer when you are outdoors.
- Use your daily workouts as time-outs just for yourself.
- Enjoy friendly competition with family and friends by setting a weight-loss challenge.
- Give your workouts more meaning by setting goals to do a walk or run for a cause you support.

